

FY25 Budget Ask - Keeping the Lights On



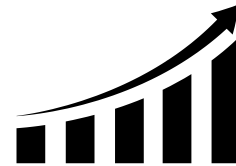
A **6.5% Medicaid rate increase (\$14.6M)** is necessary to keep the lights on at designated and specialized service agencies. This need is based on CPI rates, healthcare & operational insurance increases, U.S. Bureau of Labor statistic wage increases, and fringe increases.

Thanks to your support, increases in FY23 and FY24 brought our turnover rates back to pre-pandemic levels, from a system-wide high of 33.6% in FY23 down to 23.1% in FY24. Vacancy rates are trending downward as well, from a high of 18.1% in FY22 to 15.0% in FY24. We need to continue this positive momentum to avoid limiting access to high-quality services and supports.



Providing Essential State Services to Vermonters

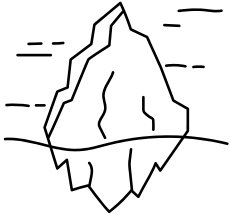
We are providing services required by the state to thousands of Vermonters. When our funding decreases, our ability to support the full continuum of care is limited, eroding an essential safety net in Vermont.



Supporting the DA & SSA Workforce

- Workers need inflationary wage increases to support their basic needs, so they have the capacity to support the needs of others.
- Low wage is the primary reason people leave our workforce.
- When our workforce decreases, access to services, including crisis services, decreases.
- **The VCP network served over 50,000 Vermonters in FY23**

The Danger of Growing the Crisis Iceberg



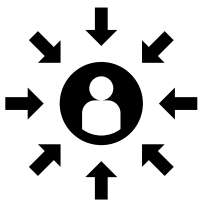
If we are not investing in the system of care, we will have more need for crisis supports. Crisis support will always be a necessary component of the continuum of care **AND** we need to have ongoing support to mitigate the risk and impact of crisis situations. Critical upstream services are essential to the global health of Vermont, and have long-term cost savings. We need to invest in all parts of the system to truly support the needs of Vermonters and avoid growing the crisis iceberg.

Increase in Acuity - Increase in Needs



COVID caused a human services surge that is still upon us. We continue to see increases in Social Determinants of Health needs and are experiencing complex needs of individuals and families across all service programs.

Individuals and Families at the Center



We need to ensure that people are able to access the care they need, when they need it, and how they need it. Our services are individual and family centered and we want to ensure that those we support are able to access the care that is right for them in the most supportive and least restrictive environment.

89%



(89% of clients said the services they received made a difference)



FY25 Increase to Eldercare Program - DAIL



\$444,000 in general funds is needed to support our Eldercare Program - a state-wide program serving older Vermonters who face mental health and substance use challenges, have limited access to services, and who experience barriers to receiving office-based care. Funding for this program has not been increased in 20 years. Currently, this essential program runs at a deficit with a substantial waiting list.



Invest in Community-Based I/DD Services

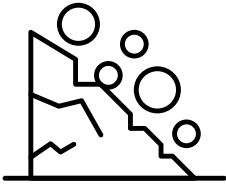
- Investing in community-based services puts less strain on other sectors such as hospitals and nursing homes which are more expensive to fund.
- Staffing challenges result in people waiting for eligibility approval or receiving fewer community-based services.



Increase Capacity for Supporting Long-Term I/DD Needs

- The system is held on the shoulders of underpaid and exhausted staff.
- The DS community system can't build capacity unless staff are paid a livable wage.
- **In FY23, 4,600 individuals with I/DD were supported by the VCP network; 46% of whom had a co-occurring mental health diagnosis.**

System Changes Impacts Stability for Individuals with I/DD



Recent Developmental Services system and procedural changes (new assessment process, payment reform, conflict of interest free case management) are creating additional stress on a vital system of support for individuals with I/DD and autism that is already strained. It is imperative that we commit to maintaining stability in our services, relationships, and housing by adequately compensating and supporting our staff, Shared Living Providers, and other contracted staff. Otherwise, we risk continuing to lose high-quality staff and erode this essential system of care.

A Safety Net for Vulnerable Vermonters



- The needs and costs to support vulnerable Vermonters will not go away. They will show up in more costly interventions such as crisis services, law enforcement and corrections, child welfare, schools, and more.
- If the system fails, it will have a profound impact on the safety net that was created to support vulnerable Vermonters and place additional demands on public safety services.

Following State Statute



(Cite as: 18 V.S.A. § 8914) § 8914. Rates of payments to designated and specialized service agencies:

When establishing rates of payment for designated and specialized service agencies, the Secretary shall adjust rates to take into account factors that include:

- (1) the reasonable cost of any governmental mandate that has been enacted, adopted, or imposed by any State or federal authority; and (2) a cost adjustment factor to reflect changes in reasonable costs of goods and services of designated and specialized service agencies, including those attributed to inflation and labor market dynamics